

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2563

INFO USINT ALGIERS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT IMMEDIATE

USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 585

S E C R E T RABAT 3307

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MO US SS

SUBJECT: LARAKI VISIT TO WASHINGTON

REFS: RABAT 3156; 3128; 3259; 3260; 3149

1. SUMMARY. FON MIN LARAKI, ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM KING, WISHES VISIT WASHINGTON IN VERY NEAR FUTURE TO PRESENT MOROCCAN CASE ON SPANISH SAHARA AND TO SEEK US INTERVENTION WITH SPAIN. I BELIEVE THIS VISIT COULD HAVE USEFUL CALMING EFFECT; FOR THIS AND OTHER REASONS I STRONGLY RECOMMEND FOREIGN MINISTER BE GIVEN EARLY APPOINTMENT WITH SECRETARY. END SUMMARY.

2. LARAKI TELEPHONED ME EVENING JULY 15 TO SAY HE WISHED TO PROCEED TO WASHINGTON IN VERY NEAR FUTURE. HE SAID HE WAS ACTING ON KING'S INSTRUCTIONS. HE ADDED THAT HE WAS GOING TO ALGIERS FOR ONE-DAY VISIT JULY 16 TO SEEK "TRUE ATTITUDE OF ALGERIANS" ON SPANISH SAHARA ISSUE. KING WANTED HIM TO LEAVE AS SOON THEREAFTER AS POSSIBLE FOR US, HOPEFULLY TO SEE PRESIDENT BUT IN ANY EVENT TO MEET WITH SECRETARY IN ORDER TO "ACQUAINT USG WITH MOROCCAN POSITION." LARAKI ADDED NOW-FAMILIAR COMMENT THAT
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EVEN IF WESTERN POWERS ACCEPTED PRESENT SITUATION IN SAHARA,

MOROCCO WOULD NOT. LARAKI HOPED FOR QUICK ANSWER FROM US ON APPOINTMENTS.

3. OUR PREVIOUS ANALYSIS OF MOROCCAN STRATEGY (SEE REFTELS, ESPECIALLY 3156) SUGGESTED THAT THE CRISIS WAS LIKELY TO ESCALATE FURTHER, BUT WE ARE SOMEWHAT SURPRISED AT SPEED WITH WHICH GOM IS MOVING. FOR THE MOMENT WE CAN ONLY SPECULATE AS TO REASONS FOR EXCEPTIONAL PRESSURE AND DRIVE THAT NOW CHARACTERIZE KING'S SAHARAN STRATEGY. FOR EXAMPLE, (1) WAFFLING RESPONSES FROM SOME ARAB CAPITALS WHERE KING HAS BEEN SEEKING SUPPORT PLUS FEAR OF REPORTED ALGERIAN TROOP MOVEMENTS MAY HAVE PERSUADED KING HE MUST STRIKE HARD AND FAST TO TRANSLATE PRESENT CONFRONTATION INTO A GENUINE CRISIS BETWEEN ARAB STATE AND COLONIAL POWER OR RISK LOSING ENTIRE BALL GAME; (2) REAL OR PRETENDED ANGER AT HAUGHTY (BUT ALTOGETHER EXPECTED) TONE OF SPANISH NOTE TO UN (USUN 2415) MAY HAVE PERSUADED KING GOS NEEDS MORE PRESSURE; (3) GENEROUS DOSE OF ROYAL SELF-INTOXICATION BY HIS OWN ORATORY AND BY UNACCUSTOMED SPECTACLE OF NATIONAL UNITY (ON THIS ISSUE ONLY).

4. REGARDLESS OF WHAT WE MAY THINK OF KING'S CURRENT STRATEGY, I STRONGLY RECOMMEND GIVING LARAKI APPOINTMENT TO SEE THE SECRETARY AT AN EARLY DATE. AT MINIMUM, SECRETARY CAN EXERCISE AT LEAST marginally moderating influence by reiterating our own neutrality while counseling direct GOM-GOS negotiations in calmer atmosphere. AS SITUATION UNFOLDS BETWEEN NOW AND TIME OF APPOINTMENT, OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE ADDITIONAL POINTS MAY OCCUR, POINTS THAT CAN ADVANCE VARIOUS US REGIONAL INTERESTS IN MORE POSITIVE WAYS THAN FOREGOING. WE ARE EXAMINING SUCH POSSIBILITIES AND PLAN SEND SEPTTEL SHORTLY, EXAMINING CONTINGENCIES AND MAKING CERTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING US STRATEGY.

5. IF PRESIDENT COULD ALSO RECEIVE FOREIGN MINISTER THIS WOULD HAVE EXCELLENT IMPACT HERE.

6. WE WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE RECEIVING CURRENT APPRAISALS BY EMBASSIES MADRID AND NOUAKCHOTT AND USINT ALGIERS; ALSO REQUEST REPORTS US EMBASSY CAIRO, JIDDA AND DAMASCUS WHETHER FM LARAKI'S CLAIM OF EGYPTIAN, SAUDI AND SYRIAN SUPPORT
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FOR MOROCCAN POSITION WELL FOUNDED.
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